

Pioneer Fire Company Building  
296-302 South Main Street  
Providence  
Providence County  
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-247

HABS  
RI,  
4-PROV,  
144-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## PIONEER FIRE COMPANY BUILDING

NOTE:

This building is shown in photograph of William Harding House,  
278-282 South Main Street, Providence, HABS No. RI-234

HABS  
RI,  
4-PROV,  
144-

Address: 296-302 South Main Street, Providence, Providence  
County, Rhode Island.

Present Owner: The City of Providence.

Brief Statement  
of Significance: This is a two-story masonry building, built by  
one of the early volunteer fire companies in  
Providence between 1847 and 1854.

Reference: John Hutchins Cady, The Civic and Architectural  
Development of Providence 1636-1950 (Providence,  
Rhode Island: The Book Shop, 1957), p. 123.

Original and  
Subsequent Owners:

1847 INDENTURE: Harriet Brown of the first part and the  
Pioneer Fire Company of the second part, established by legislature.  
The party of the first part farm leases to the party of the second  
part a certain lot of land for ten years (renewable) at an annual  
rental of \$122.50....Bounded: Beginning 13' 9" N from the brick  
wall of Thayer's Mansion House, 49' on South Main Street, thence E/ly  
holding the width and parallel with the S line of the property of  
Thayer 44' 10"; E parallel with the street 49'; S parallel with the  
N line of the Brick Wall 44' 10"....with the provision that all  
buildings and other improvements that shall be at any time erected  
shall be held pledged as due payment of rent, taxes and interest. -  
Deed Book 105, page 398, in Providence City Hall.

1854 The Pioneer Fire Company quit claims to Stephen Mason,  
and Samuel Arnold treasurers, a certain BRICK BUILDING on the E side  
of South Main Street on land leased of Mrs. Patrick Brown..plus fix-  
tures...the lease dated 1847. - Deed Book 137, page 209, in Providence  
City Hall.

1954 Property taxed to the Pioneer Fire Company (city)

1857 Property was taxed to Harriet Brown and to her heirs  
for many years and in

1950 Taxed to RI Hospital Trust for the heirs u/w Desmond  
Fitzgerald for Caroline E Van Rensseler, Harriet F Clark, and Stephen  
S Fitzgerald 3/4; Eleanor F Francke 1/8' and Desmond Fitzgerald 1/8.

1951 R I Hospital Trust Company u/w Desmond Fitzgeralds sell  
to the City of Providence a certain lot of land with all buildings

and improvements of the N/Wly side of Pioneer Lane between South Main and Well Street Bounded: W by South Main Street 49.21'; N 45.30', 26.14'E and another 45.26' N by Samuel S. Edward Inc; E by Well Street 23'.07; S by Pioneer Street. - Deed Book 991, page 149 in Providence City Hall.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey  
for the Providence Preservation Society, May 1962

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

General Statement: This is a masonry building, one of the few remaining examples of the type in which the ground floor is opened up by a stone framing system, using monolithic granite posts one story high, and heavy granite lintels to support the brick wall above.

Condition of fabric: Poor.

Overall dimensions: About 50' wide, faces west, two stories in front; on hillside, one story in rear.

Foundations: Stone.

Wall construction: Brick front and sides, common bond. Granite frame on first floor shop fronts. Fieldstone rear, plastered over.

Chimneys: Two brick chimneys in the end walls.

Openings:

Doors: Four-panel wood rear door; Greek Revival moldings.

Windows: Six over six light double-hung wood windows on sides and rear. Stone lintels and sills.

Roof:

Shape, covering: Gable roof--rolled asphalt roofing. Brick parapets at gable ends.

Floor plans: First floor interior apparently entirely changed. Second floor is one undivided room.

Site: The building faces west in an old business district, on the sidewalk line at the front.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect  
National Park Service  
May 1962.